

Natural Yard Care

Our gardening choices have an impact on things we care about, including the health of our families and pets, and the preservation of natural resources and wildlife.

Natural yard care choices for landscape design and maintenance will transform your yard into a beautiful, healthy refuge, while reducing waste, potentially harmful stormwater run-off, and the amount of garden chemicals and water you use. Go natural with these five steps; you'll save money and have more time to enjoy the beauty in your yard.



Build healthy soil.

NEW OR ESTABLISHED, A SUCCESSFUL GARDEN STARTS WITH HEALTHY SOIL.

- Add compost and organic mulch for lush, vibrant plants with deeper roots, fewer pests and weed problems, and lower water needs.
- Make compost at home (it's easy), or buy it in bags or bulk.
- If needed, fertilize moderately with organic or slow release fertilizers.



Plant right for your site.

CHOOSE PLANTS THAT FIT THE CONDITIONS IN YOUR YARD.

- Choose pest/disease-resistant and drought-tolerant plants.
- Plant trees to provide shade, reduce water needs, slow stormwater runoff, and create wildlife habitat.
- Give lawns and vegetables full sun and consider reducing your lawn size.
- Organize plants needing lots of care into small, easy-to-access clusters.
- Create native plant buffers near streams and lakes.



Practice smart watering.

SMART WATERING HELPS REDUCE WATER BILLS AND GROW HEALTHIER PLANTS.

- Water infrequently, but deeply, being sure to moisten the entire root area.
- Mulch planting beds to reduce water evaporation.
- Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation in plant beds.
- Don't over-water; match your watering schedule to weather conditions, use timers, and add hose shut-off nozzles.





Think twice before using pesticides.

SCIENTISTS HAVE FOUND 18 WEED AND BUG KILLING PRODUCTS IN BELLEVUE'S LOCAL STREAMS. AVOID PESTICIDES THROUGH HEALTHY GARDENING PRACTICES THAT PREVENT PROBLEMS FROM STARTING.

- Identify pests, weeds, or diseases before using any controls.
- Try non-toxic controls first.
- As a last resort, choose least toxic chemical pesticides and follow label directions precisely.
- Learn to recognize beneficial insects—nature's best pest managers.



Practice natural lawn care.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS FOR A LUSH, HEALTHY LAWN THAT DOESN'T NEED CHEMICALS AND PRODUCES LESS WASTE.

- Mow higher (1-2 inches), mow often, and leave the clippings on the lawn.
- Fertilizer moderately in May and September with organic or slow release fertilizers.
- Think twice before using weed and feed or other pesticides.
- Water deeply to moisten the root zone; let the soil dry out between watering.
- Revitalize your lawn by aerating, over-seeding, and top-dressing with compost.



RESOURCES

Bellevue's Natural Lawn and Garden website
www.bellevuewa.gov/naturallyardcare.htm

Bellevue's Natural Gardening Guides

Composting Food Scraps • Composting Yard Trimmings • Drip and Soak • Fertilizer • Garden Design • Lawn Alternatives • Lawns • Mulch • Pests, Weeds, and Diseases • Plant Right • Seasonal Calendar • Soil • Watering **For copies,** visit Bellevue's Natural Lawn and Garden website (*above*) or call Bellevue Utilities at 425-452-6932.

Natural Yard Care Neighborhoods
www.naturallyardcare.info

The Garden Hotline
www.gardenhotline.org or 206-633-0224

Cascade Water Alliance
www.cascadewater.org

Grow Smart, Grow Safe

Lawn and garden products guide
www.growsmartgrowsafe.org

Public Gardens

- The Waterwise Garden at Bellevue Botanical Garden
www.bellevuebotanical.org
- Master Gardener Lake Hills Greenbelt Demonstration Garden
 15500 SE 16th Street, Bellevue, WA

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